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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

CHARACTER and CONDUCT

OF A

PHYSICIAN.

IN

TWENTY LETTERS

TO A

FRIEND.

*Let us reason cautiously, pronounce modestly, practise sincerely,
and hope humbly.*

Lord Bolingbroke, Vol. v. p. 40. qto. edit.

L O N D O N:

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yard. 1772.



P R E F A C E.

THE following letters, on the character and conduct of a physician, are not designed to exhibit a scheme of imposition on the understandings, or an indulgence of the credulities of mankind. Neither are they designed to expose to the world, an employment of infinite advantage to its

welfare. But they are intended to shew what temper, and what conduct, will be most beneficial to the physician in his practice, and how hypocrisy and ignorance may be discovered by those who employ him. They are intended to shew, that amiable manners, good-sense, and a liberal education, are the most essential, nay, the only qualifications in this character: They are intended to shew, that modesty of disposition and humility of behaviour, that humanity of temper and sensibility of heart, are its greatest ornaments, and religion and virtue, its firmest supports: They are intended to shew, that as the first of virtues is to do good, the person who engages in the profession of

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medicine, has the greatest occasion for the principle of benevolence: In fine they are intended to shew, that every thing excellent, which can be acquired by learning, every thing amiable which can be attained by virtue, and every ability which can be exercised by a good understanding, are the careful handmaids which should attend his path, and conduct him to the temple of fame and of utility.

There may be bad men, there may be artful men, there may be covetous men, and there may be ignorant men, who may enjoy this profession, and enjoy it with success. But whoever practises with ease to himself, and entirely to the
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satisfaction of his patients, will be the wise and honest man, who despises vanity, and is superior to craft. Let then the profits or the reputation of the physician be what they will, the good of mankind must be the universal object of his concern. And tho' poverty and disgrace should be the consequences of honour and of humanity, yet the cause of virtue and benevolence will flourish for ever. It will flourish indeed, not in the gains or approbation of the world, but in a happy temper, and a heart at ease.

What has been advanced with regard to education, must be left to the judgement of mankind; but I hope the directions I have given,
will

will not mislead the student of this science. And I have this comfortable satisfaction, that if they do mislead him, the dispositions with which I have endeavoured to furnish his mind, will enable him easily to regain the path. What I have advanced with regard to the conduct of a physician towards his brethren, and the rest of mankind, will perhaps expose me to censure and contempt. To censure, for want of flattery towards persons who may think they deserve it; to contempt, for a want of knowledge of that world to which I have attempted to give rules of behaviour. With regard to the former, I hope I join with every honest man in disregarding it; with respect to the latter,

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ter, I appeal for that candour which is due to every one who desires from his heart that all his fellow creatures may live happy, and die contented.

E R R A T A.

- Page 16. line 11 for *tybe* read *type*.
 17 ——— 11 for *authorizes* read *abhors*.
 18 ——— 3 for *this* read *they*.
 21 ——— 2 for *its* read *his*.
 Ibid. ——— 23 for *vanity* read *variety*.
 31 ——— 14 for *thoughts* read *thought*.
 36 ——— 16 for *bear* read *have*.
 40 ——— 7 for *this* read *the*.
 Ibid. ——— 11 after *but*, read *the best are*.
 43 ——— last for *thing* read *theory*.
 53 ——— 19 before *ordered*, read *or*.
 62 ——— 9 for *there* read *these*.
 64 ——— 6 for *his* read *the*.
 74 ——— 6 for *passion* read *passions*.
 77 ——— 22 for *either*, read *rather*.
 91 ——— 3 for *afflictions* read *affections*.
 103 ——— 13 before *grimace*, put *by*.
 109 ——— 20 after *same*, add *time*.
 140 ——— 19 for *This* read *His*.
 144 ——— 15 for *direction* read *discretion*.
 Ibid. ——— 20 dele *the*.

O B S E R-

OBSERVATIONS, &c.

L E T T E R I.

DEAR SIR,

THE task which you solicit me to undertake is as difficult as it is important, and yet many circumstances will encourage me to comply with your request. None, however, appear so powerful as the regard I have always entertained for your family. Disinterested and benevolent actions will ever, I hope, excite gratitude and esteem in the breast of one who always wishes to do good. I cannot but be pleased too, I must confess, with the confidence you place in my integrity, at the same time,

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that I am conscious of great deficiencies in those talents which are essential to the just performance of what you require. In every profession, not only a knowledge of the arts, which are immediately subservient to it; but a knowledge likewise of what will make us engage in it, with ease to ourselves, and benefit to our fellow Creatures, is necessary to be cultivated. To instruct then how this is to be done, demands in the practice of physic, such abilities as are not easily to be found. To how small a share of them the person of whom you ask for information can pretend, our future correspondence, I am afraid will fatally convince you. I am persuaded, however, that my instructions will be grafted upon such a mind, as, at the same time that it discovers the defects of my understanding, will have resolution and ingenuity enough to amend any of its own errors which I may have pointed out.

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When you first consulted me about educating your Son to a profession which I had embraced; I was happy in the thought that I could recommend to you a book written with so much elegance, and dictated by such an amiable disposition, as the *Observations on the duties and offices of a physician*; I was especially pleased to reflect likewise, that the author of it was a gentleman under whose instruction your son was likely to receive all the advantages of his profession. But I was afraid how it would satisfy a mind so inquisitive as your's with regard to every thing that respects the welfare of your family, and could almost have foretold the result of your reflections upon it. Give me leave, however, to justify the author of that work from your censures, if so harsh a term can be applied to your observations. He wrote it, not to a particular friend, who was in doubt, whether his child would fill such a station with propriety, nor to tell the world who were fit persons to be physicians.

It was part of his lectures, and directed to people of all dispositions and of all capacities. To the indolent and stupid, who had embraced such a profession without any consideration, but of the gain that was to be made by it; to the man of pleasure, who embraced it, because it was a genteel employment, and introduced him to an agreeable society; and to the grave, thinking, and industrious scholar who alone was qualified for the post. It was not to tell mankind, who ought to come and hear his lectures; but, since students were come, to inform them what character they ought to assume to secure the regards of their fellow mortals.

You observe, likewise, another deficiency in this work, which I shall also endeavour to obviate. There are a thousand circumstances, you justly observe, in a physician's conduct, which require an explanation. He lives more particularly with the world, perhaps, than a person
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of any other profession. He often enters into every secret circumstance belonging to a family. At times, he is their friend, their parent, their only protector. To know their caprice and humour, therefore, and how to accommodate himself to them in each of these relations, requires an eminent degree of judgement and understanding. But it requires likewise rules, you say, and rules which this ingenious professor hath omitted. He hath very justly omitted them. His pupils were brought from different nations, where a variety of manners and customs must prevail. To have entered therefore minutely into rules, to which the behaviour might be accommodated in all, would have been a difficult task, and to many useless. To have adopted the plan of any one in particular, would have been impertinent and dictatorial. As your son, however, will most probably practise in England, you will not be displeased with me, if I enter into some more minute disquisitions, than

what have been mentioned by this elegant author. To do this, indeed, is one principal reason why I undertake this correspondence. But I shall not slavishly omit whatever he has mentioned, but throw his book entirely aside. You cannot but expect, therefore, to meet often with some of his favorite sentiments, sentiments which have made a very deep impression on my mind, and which I would wish never to obliterate from it. My method, indeed, will be different from what he has adopted, not because I dislike his plan, but because I allow myself a much larger scope.

My design then, Sir, shall be this. In the first place to shew you what disposition of mind, or what characteristic features are essential to the profession of a physician. I shall next describe what improvements are necessary to conduct him to the threshold of the study of medicine, and then direct how he may cultivate the study itself. This will constitute

stitute that part which I call his private character, because it belongs to him as a private independent man, and tho' necessary to his future practice, will not be useless if he should decline it. In the next place, I shall suppose him to have finished his education, and to enter upon practice. To engage in the world in a profession which calls for the greatest resolution and the most amiable manners. Resolution, to stand against the tide of opposition ; and amiable manners, to engage the affections of mankind upon his side. To inform him how to demean himself then in this situation, will constitute two parts ; the one will consist of a cultivation of those general qualities which are subservient to these ends, which forms his public character. The other, in a method of conducting himself thro' life with the variety of persons with whom he may be engaged, and the characters with which he may be connected. He is often to act in concert with a set of people who are linked with him in the same

B 4 profession.

profession. He is to live harmoniously with them. To do this, requires a circumspection of behavior, and an attention to their interests. He must consider himself likewise as a servant of the public; and subject to the distresses of mankind. The poorest inhabitant of this earth is not beneath his notice, or deserving his contempt. All this forms his political Character.

By completing the whole of this scheme, and giving such rules in every part of it, as may make the profession fit easy and comfortable upon him, I shall, I hope, satisfy you with regard to what may be expected from your son, and you will judge how fit and how proper he is to embrace it upon such terms. Were all mankind as cautious as you are in suiting the dispositions of their children to the stations which they are afterwards to sustain in life, we should not find so many places filled by persons so little qualified for them. The generality of
parents;

parents, in the education of their children, consult either their own ease, or the perverse dispositions of people ill qualified to judge of what will terminate in their own happiness, or some accidental circumstance which may happen in their family. There is nothing more common than for parents to be fond of exalting their offspring to a higher station in the same line of business, than they themselves enjoy. Thus, surgeons and apothecaries often breed their eldest sons physicians, and attornies educate theirs to the bar. They do not, however, consider the variety of character which they are obliged to support, or how far their natural dispositions are suited to it. They imagine that persons of genius will fill every situation with propriety. There cannot, however, be a maxim more fallacious. Every man is born to some prevailing character: the poet, the philosopher, the physician, the lawyer, the statesman and the divine.

Adieu.

LETTER

L E T T E R II.

D E A R S I R,

ALthough I cannot suppose you unacquainted with the importance of the science of medicine, and of consequence the character of a physician ; yet, I must beg leave so far to trespass upon the indulgence you allow me, as to make it the subject of this letter. A subject, which I am persuaded will be very agreeable, tho' little instructive to you. I know it has engaged a great deal of your attention. I know it has acquired a considerable degree of your esteem. You would otherwise never have wished to have been educated to this profession yourself, you would never be so anxious about your educating your son to it.

There are a set of men in the world who have pride enough in their own characters, and envy enough towards the character of others, to despise the profession

fession of phyfic, and rank it amongst
 the various crafts by which mankind are
 bubbled and deluded. I hope I do not
 misrepresent them when I say, they are
 influenced by pride and envy. Their own
 practice will justify the accusation: for
 most of these persons, whilst they con-
 temn the regular-bred physician, support
 and encourage the ignorant quack and
 the bold impostor. Is not this then,
 complimenting their own judgements for
 want of education, whilst they vilify
 those, who, with labour and industry,
 have attained it's benefits. I am consci-
 ous, however, that when I address my-
 self to you, I have no scruples of this
 kind to remove; but that, as I enter into
 your sentiments, I shall readily gain your
 approbation. Mankind are so fond of
 procuring ease from pain, and of enjoy-
 ing life as long as they are able, that
 whatever offers itself under these friend-
 ly aspects, must be respected amongst
 them. That phyfic can do these, is in-
 contestible. That it can preserve life
 longer

longer than the designs of providence see fit, is impossible, and to which it's most powerful advocates do not pretend. There is a considerable difference between making life easy, comfortable and happy to us, in clearing the bed of sickness with an alleviation of our most grievous pains, and in an apparent deliverance from the jaws of death; and in the thwarting the methods by which God has ordained the dominion of the universe: Nay, who knows, but that physicians are some of those instruments in the hands of providence, by which life is longer preserved, than a natural constitution, with all the disadvantages of art and of luxury, would support.

Whoever disputes this, let him attend the bed of sickness under a dangerous and excruciating disease. Let him see in such distress, that by the prescriptions of a physician, pain can be relieved. Let him see the hand of death, just ready to seize upon the patient, driven away for a
further

further respite. That physic hath been abused, no one will deny. Whatever acts upon the good sense of mankind, will act upon the credulities of those who have no understanding. But because fools are duped, are wise men to avoid the proper exercise of their abilities? by no means. Let us rather reflect, whether that be not a specious more than a solid understanding, which is fond of doubting, merely because ignorant persons are apt too implicitly to believe. We may refer such a disposition to the worst kind of pride, which avoids as far as possible thinking with the common herd of mankind, merely because their thoughts are level to every capacity. The common herd of mankind, however, if they fall into a good track, may be relieved from many a troublesome and tedious complaint, whilst the sensible despatch of medicine leads a wretched and painful life in compliment to his own superior abilities.

Whoever

Whoever studies this science judiciously, and endeavours to qualify himself for all its benefits, will find it is not worth his while to support it as a craft. For he will soon see, that the labour and difficulties which he will be obliged to sustain in the practice of it, the infinite fountains of knowledge which he must continually search in the study, and the little satisfaction which every disease will afford to assure him of future success, will make it a generous, rather than a mercenary employment; a sacrifice to the good of mankind, rather than a wilful imposition on their understandings. I need not convince you, that whoever enters upon the practice of Physic from pecuniary views, will be defeated in his scheme, unless he likewise practise those mean and dishonourable arts which all good physicians disown, and which are inconsistent with the benefit of mankind.

There is no science which, in the study of it, requires such deep application. It
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not only demands a previous attention to the most abstruse sciences, but is connected more immediately with others which require reflection, memory, and judgment, in the most eminent degree. Besides this, it is a history of facts, which are inexhaustible. Every day, and every hour we live, some new disease is either presented to our experience, or recorded by others, which solicits our regard. Some new symptom rushes upon our practice, some new cure attracts our notice. In other professions, and the knowledge which is necessary to be acquired for them, some standard may be fixed to which we may always repair, and good sense, with judicious, nay, with careful reasoning, may easily qualify for practice. In theology we may always refer to the Bible; in law to the settled constitution of our country; but there is no constitution so unsettled as the animal system. Every human breast is a kingdom within itself, which the varieties of air, of climate, of food and of dress, may differently

ferently affect. And if we were to constitute changes upon every human body with every distinct disease, to what an infinite number should we increase them? The ingenious M. Sauvages has given us near two thousand different species of disorders. If we increase the symptoms only ten-fold, what a boundless variety of knowledge shall we lay before the contemplation of a physician. — Besides this, disorders often take a new type; new symptoms continually obtrude upon us, and new medicines are offered to our inspection. To consider then how to arrange these severally in their respective places; to know what has been done, and what is continually performing; and to know how to adjust the observations of others, to what we see ourselves, is no such inconsiderable task. A perfect knowledge one might suppose would make mankind, as well as the physician's fame, immortal. To endeavour to gain this perfection then is his indispensable duty; because the objects to be served by
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it, are the life, peace, and safety of our fellow creatures. But to these our endeavours so arduous and difficult as this may appear, we may add one thing more which is infinitely more mortifying to us. It is the contemplation of the disappointed views of our friends, who look up to us with anxious countenances for a relief which we are unable to give. If interest can enjoy this scene, surely humanity ~~authorizes~~ it. And will those who call themselves men for the sake of a pecuniary reward, suffer those pangs which can never be satisfied by it? By no means. Why are there any physicians? it may be asked. It is wonderful there are. But when young men enter upon the science, they behold scenes of affliction, at a very great distance, they approach them with gradual steps; and when they begin to practise, are in some measure prepared for the conflict. I would flatter myself, likewise, that principles of generosity have great influence over their minds. They wish to do good. They are fond

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of the sciences, and they despise the common method of obtaining a fortune, and employing their time ; which whilst this may enrich their purses, leaves the mind a barren wilderness and a howling desert.

This letter you may think rather gloomy and discouraging ; I hope, however, in my next to dispel all doubts, when I shew the natural dispositions which are fitted for this profession, and which, I think, your son enjoys in an exalted degree.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R III.

D E A R S I R,

YOU cannot be unacquainted with this maxim, that to every profession a peculiar character is adapted: that by this it distinguishes it's members from the rest of mankind, is known to them at first sight, and is qualified for performing every office belonging to it with decency and reputation. You may think, however, with many others, that such a character is more artificial than natural, and that it is invented by the cunning, and supported by the craft of men, who are willing to separate themselves from the rest of their fellow creatures, for fear that they should be as wise and as knowing as themselves. I will endeavour then to shew you in this letter, that such a character may be derived from the natural dispositions of the mind; and that where we find it entirely artificial, it must

be owing to the covetousness, or the indiscretion of parents and guardians, who inspect the education of young persons. There is certainly a great variety in our natural dispositions. No one is gay, volatile, and fickle, and at the same time grave, reserved, and determined. We know also to what profession these particular dispositions belong. If men deviate, therefore, from the laws of nature, and do not suit the profession with the disposition which is best qualified for it, we cannot blame the person who is educated to it, for adopting a character, which is opposite to his native temper. He sees when it is too late the mistake which has been made, and, instead of relinquishing a post for which he finds himself disqualified, but to which his resolution tempts him to adhere, he enters readily into the deception, and thus brings upon himself dishonour, and a disgrace upon the profession to which he belongs. He brings a disgrace upon the profession, by altering those dispositions which every
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one was acquainted with, and approved, as ~~it's~~ greatest ornament. Mankind naturally admire a consistency of conduct. Can they think then that profession to be other than craft, which destroys this consistency, and induces a person in professing a peculiar character, to deviate from those natural dispositions which were his honour and credit, whilst a citizen of the world?

He brings, likewise, a disgrace upon himself. For if he hath not resolution enough to alter his native temper, he will be despised by those who will think him, upon this account, ill qualified for the character he espouses. And if he does alter his native temper, he will be despised by his first friends, for engaging so confidently in a situation by which he is obliged to sacrifice his virtue. For all hypocrisy is vice.—It is not my business to exhibit to you the several dispositions which are suited to the variety of professions tenable by mankind. All that I

shall attempt to describe, will be those which I think necessary in the practice of physic. Because they agree with the character of your son, you will think me guilty of flattery. But as I shall attempt to give the character of a physician, in the fullest manner I am able; I hope you will not disapprove of this first and necessary step to it, tho' useless, when applied in the present case.

The first disposition then, which I think incumbent upon a person of this profession, and indeed his greatest ornament, in every period of his life, his private studies, and in his public behaviour, is modesty. Not, indeed, that modesty which results from an awkward bashfulness, or a sheepish timidity; but such as is founded on just sentiments of human nature, on the imperfection of their abilities, and the insufficiency of their attainments. Such as is founded likewise in true sentiments of his own nature, on his diffidence in what he really

ally knows, and his perpetual eagerness to know what he is ignorant of. To decline knowledge, is as great a proof of pride, as of ignorance ; to presume upon it, of arrogance as of insufficiency.—There is no profession, however, which requires this disposition, so much as physic. — He who belongs to it never knows too much. It is likewise required in it's most extensive degree in such a person's commerce with the world. He has to do with men of all characters, and of all dispositions, with ignorant persons, and with those who are proud of their learning ; with clowns and with men of the world ; with all ages, and with every sex ; with poor and rich ; with young and old. He encounters likewise all their prejudices, and every upstart humour. He sees them at those times when they have no guard over their passions ; when every bad disposition, if they possess it, will appear, if they have it not, perhaps, be assumed, and when even civility and good man-
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ners will be neglected and forgotten. To what an humiliating situation doth this reduce him?—Humiliating, indeed, to the proud and disdainful man. But the person who enjoys a native modesty and humility of disposition, is always fond of relieving the distressed, and he rejoices to do good, even under such degrading and disagreeable circumstances.

If there are not more ungracious, there may yet be more delicate circumstances to engage the modesty of a physician. There are a thousand secrets which are made known to him, which are concealed from the whole world besides; sometimes from the nearest relations. These are most powerful trials of his most delicate principles. To want this disposition would make him insensible of their importance, and to betray them would injure him in the tenderest part. Besides, this disposition engages confidence, and confidence may be of the utmost importance in procuring relief. How many, alas! have fallen a sacrifice
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to an ill-timed bashfulness, for want of knowing the real temper of their physician ? We have seen of what consequence this character is with regard to his commerce with his patients. Let us now take a view of it's advantages, as it respects the satisfaction which it gives himself. It must be very disagreeable to a proud man to be called to the bed of sickness, in order to give relief, and be driven from it as hastily by the impetuous temper of his patient. It must interfere with his best thoughts, deprive him of the means of thinking properly, and very much mislead his judgment on the case. Whilst his mind is agitated with thoughts about himself, he must neglect those which so intimately concern his fellow creature. But the modest man is insensible of these affronts. He argues from the fallibility of human nature. He sees the distress of his fellow mortal, and he pities him for his mental, as well as his bodily, infirmity. Another disposition which every person of this profession should

should enjoy, is gravity. It is this character, indeed, which, when assumed, often disgraces him in the eyes of the world. It is necessary, or mankind would never have universally agreed to associate them together. A volatile disposition, if it can be brought to think, may be made susceptible of its opposite. There are many distressing circumstances in the practice of physic to induce it. But few persons, of volatile dispositions, ever do think seriously enough to be educated to this profession. A grave man naturally thinks; it is no restraint to him to do it; he is therefore best qualified for it of any other. I have already said that a physician can never know too much; I may now add, he can never think too much: for knowledge without reflection can be of little use to the human mind. But grave people do not always think the most. There is sometimes an indolence and inattention in gravity. If they undertake a profession, however, there is more trust to be placed
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in such a character than in a volatile disposition. There is one thing, of which we are certain in gravity, that it is not so fond of novelty and variety; and, therefore, not so liable to be diverted from the thoughts it should indulge. Gravity is, likewise, best fitted to the solemn occasions in which a physician may sometimes engage. He often views nature in her last extremity, and when he cannot contribute relief, must excite the sorrow of many a friend, as well as many a tender and affectionate soul. A smile in such cases would increase the dilemma, and betray the impropriety of the character. Gravity, likewise, commands confidence. For fear of being laughed at, how often do mankind suppress their most interesting thoughts? Gravity relieves that restraint, and lays the physician open to every complaint. Much more might be said upon this subject, and many other qualities might be adduced as necessary to this profession. Where they are at all included, however,

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in the moral qualities of the heart, I have referred them to a general head. I am afraid, you will think, I have wanted in this letter to write the panegyric of your son: which has made me much shorter than I could have wished, and obliged me to subscribe myself, perhaps, too abruptly,

Yours, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R IV.

DEAR SIR,

YOU might naturally expect that I should a little more enlarge the subject of my last letter, and that whilst I am describing the dispositions which are essential to a physician, I should consider the moral qualities of the mind, as well as those which have no reference to right or wrong. It is natural, indeed, I will allow, for one man to be more viciously inclined than another, or to be distinguished by particular regards to virtue and to vice, independent of reflection, or the good consequences his actions may procure. But a physician is entirely a moral character, and virtue is more particularly an object of his concern, than of most other mens. It is necessary then, that he should cultivate every disposition of this kind, in which he is deficient. And, I think, it can be no injury

jury to society, or to the individual, if by educating a person to this profession, we breed up a virtuous member of the community. The same cannot always be said of those natural dispositions which were the subject of the last letter. They may be ornaments, but are by no means necessary to virtue.—One of them may be always a grace, indeed, to every character; the other can suit only some particular stations, and is devoid of some of those particular faculties, which render us most amenable in society.—I shall defer the peculiar moral improvements which are necessary to this character, till I come to consider the public life of a physician. Do not think, however, that by moral improvement, I mean an inclination to virtue in general. For such an inclination must not be left to that fatal period. I mean those which constitute some of the graces of human nature, and which, tho' the virtuous man may be without, yet none but virtuous men can cultivate with propriety. To be

be good, to be sober, and to be religious, are necessary in every profession; that they are more particularly necessary to that of a physician, I will make the subject of this letter.

I have already shewed you, that those natural dispositions which incline a person to think, are absolutely essential to this character. Can any one then be so averse to reflection, as he who is a slave to immorality and profaneness? The best excuse for those who indulge in these vices is, that they do not think; for if thought be added to their irregularities, they must appear more like dæmons than men. A thinking brute is a monster in the creation; whilst other animals are led away by the blind impulse of passion, we connect no moral ideas with their actions: but if they should think and reason as we do, we should at once make them accountable for their conduct. It is common, however, for persons of immoral characters to embrace this as well as any other profession. But then

then they bring a certain disgrace upon it, and render it ridiculous in the eyes of the world. A religious education then is of the utmost consequence; and tho' it be useless to shew it to you, yet I must beg leave just to mention some of those advantages which may be derived from it.

Religion, even tho' it be a false one, where it acts upon a sincere mind, will always have this advantage over the contrary principle; that as it proceeds from conviction, it will dispose us to the most upright intentions. Where it corresponds with the best faculties of our reason, it goes hand in hand with her, and will influence not only our practice, but our knowledge likewise. What is a physician to do when he is called to the bed of sickness? Is he to flatter the sick man's hopes; to sooth his aching pain, and chear his dying groans? Is he to invent magical spells and superstitious incantations, merely to delude the unwary and the ignorant? Is he to become the bug-
bear

bear of the imagination, and the bubble of mankind? Or, is he to think closely and accurately upon the case before him, to reason upon it with attention and care, and to recollect and prescribe what may be of real service to his patient, really to ease his pains, really to raise him up, if possible, to future usefulness? If he be to do the former, conscience will be of no service to him. If he be to do the latter, it is the only thing which can be of service to him. Without this religious principle he cannot be sufficiently attentive to the interests of those for whom he may be concerned. We naturally fly from pain and uneasiness, the best of us do not love them, but a bad man must necessarily desert them. There can be no pleasure in the practice of physic, but from the idea of doing good; if no such idea then ever enters our breasts, from what can the pleasures of the profession be expected? and unless we practise with pleasure, we can never do it to the satisfaction of ourselves, or the benefit of our fellow creatures.

To be continually in a fret, to be always vexed and disappointed, must hurt our best thoughts, and deprive us of those means we might otherwise use to advantage. If to do good then be the province of a physician, if to accomplish this end, his mind must be calm and easy, uninterrupted by the cares, and undisturbed by the vicissitudes of human life; he must from earliest youth cultivate the character of a good and religious man.

In the same manner as modesty and gravity, so the character of religion, engages the confidence of those for whom we are employed. Some of these may be religious themselves, and then the opposite character in a physician is inexcusable, for the most powerful reasons. Seriousness, however, occupies every mind, when it nearly thinks of it's last dissolution from the body. Men hastily fly to what can give relief; and they know that,

that, next to knowledge, sincerity is most capable of affording it. When both are joined together, they most readily secure approbation. Should it be told the worst and most abandoned of men, that a physician would no sooner leave him than he would forget all his complaints, or repair with a jocund countenance to laugh over them in the society they had once enjoyed together; all the ties of friendship, all former sympathy of souls, all ideas of connection and esteem, would be discarded from his heart, and he would fly to the thinking and serious man, whom, before, he had despised for gravity and sanctity of manners. Because he would recollect, that such a man would reflect more upon his case, and, of consequence, be more capable of administering relief.

There are some patients to whom the religious man can only be the confidant, and where the revealing a secret to one of a profane and immoral character, would

be the most effectual means of ruin and destruction. The unguarded hours of innocence, however, are sometimes made subject to these harpies of human nature.

But it is not a sanctified character alone, taken up as an hand-maid to interest, which can render a man amiable in this profession, or is what I insist upon in this place. No, it is such a religious character as proceeds from a regular and exemplary education; such as is sensible of the real benefits of virtue; and such as from the heart approves of a conscientious conduct, in every circumstance and condition of life. A person endued with such a knowledge as this, will ~~bear~~ such settled principles established in his mind, as will enable him to reason upon the propriety of religion and virtue, as well as procure their benefit to society. He will see that mankind cannot live without them with ease and convenience, that anarchy will arise upon their dissolution, and that in proportion as they are neglected

lected and contemned, confusion, disorder, and misery must prevail. These thoughts, if they are not tedious, I am persuaded will not be disagreeable to you. I am sensible they are useless from the pains you have always taken to inculcate them upon your family. They may contribute, however, to some of those pleasing and most grateful ideas which always occur upon the reflection of having done right. As such, I wish they may have the desired effect, whilst I remain, &c.

LETTER V.

DEAR SIR,

I Am afraid you will think, that in my former letters I have trifled with you too much, and have not sufficiently entered into the subject, to satisfy any of your interesting enquiries. Indeed, I have not satisfied myself; for the more I reflect upon it, the more difficulties I find it to contain. I am willing, therefore, to hover about the surface as long as I can, for fear that I shall acquit myself but awkwardly when I come to discuss the more important parts. But by what I have said, I hope you will be satisfied, if you are not fatiated with many particulars relating to the character of a physician. And I shall now endeavour to shew what will be necessary in conducting the study of this valuable science, he will be obliged to cultivate. But, previous to it, give me leave just to intimate

mate to you, what sort of genius is requisite, both for the study and practice of this profession. For the study and the practice require a genius of a very different kind.

A large and extensive memory in a mind, fitted to imbibe ideas from a great variety of objects, and retain them in their different places till they are required for action, may constitute the genius which is essential in the study. But in the practice there must be added a solid and accurate judgment. It is not sufficient that we know alone. We must be judges likewise what to do in the peculiar circumstances which offer to us. Some people imagine very few natural abilities are wanting in the practice of physic, and many of it's professors have verified it by their conduct. A blockhead indeed may practise, nay, practise with success. But he cannot practise, if he thinks with ease to himself, or entirely to the satisfaction of his patients. He may use

a variety of means, whilst he is equally alarmed at the benefit, as at the destruction they occasion. A good physician, however, must have a considerable degree of genius, to understand the symptoms which present themselves, to know their connection with the disease, to recollect what will be most serviceable in the cure, and to prognosticate the event which will succeed. Circumstances in which no man can be too confident, but apt to fail. They know as much as any one, perhaps, and yet fate obliges them to doubt. The bad physician, on the contrary, knows nothing, whilst he thinks every thing clear before his view. For in the midst of his confidence death approaches, to convince him of his errors.

I will no longer tire you with shewing you what a man ought to be, but will endeavour as far as I am able to instruct you how he may become a good physician, if he hath the above mentioned qualities firmly established in his mind. For
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without the firm establishment of these qualities, I think it cruel to torture his own soul, and the bodies of his patients, with studying a profession for which he is by no means fitted or disposed. The qualifications then, let me repeat them, are to be modest and grave in his deportment, to have had a virtuous and sober education, and to be possessed of a good memory, and a sound judgment.

With these qualifications, he should have acquired, before he enters upon the study of physic, a considerable degree of classical knowledge, both ancient and modern. As much, indeed, as any of our schools can teach him. The dead languages are the immediate languages of his profession. He is to read in them almost all the knowledge he is to acquire: He is to speak in them, upon many important occasions; and he is always to write in them, what is to be done for his fellow creatures, in the most important crisis of their lives. To be

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unskilful then in these means of science, would not only occasion a great deal of ignorance, but might be productive of a mistake, which the best wishes of a physician could never recover. I would therefore encourage this knowledge, as much as possible, and wish that whoever embraces this profession, would not only be well versed in it, but critics in it likewise. I would not exclude the Greek, more than the Latin; one fact of an antient writer, as indeed of any writer, may suggest perhaps an hint, for which a physician may rejoice through his whole life. For it may save him the life of many a dear and valuable friend. There are times, when too great anxiety may prevent our troubled thoughts from thinking with propriety. We then fly to books, and ransack every source from which knowledge can be derived from others. How distressing must it be to think, that such knowledge is envelopped in a language with which we are unacquainted? And how agreeable
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the thought, if, when we do repair to such resources, we find a pertinent remark, which may satisfy all our expectations? Upon the same accounts, the modern languages are worthy of our regard and studies; they fit us for foreign travel, and they accomplish us as gentlemen.

Next to the study of the languages, I think the study of the mathematicks of infinite consequence. Not, indeed, that they have much to do with the practical part of medicine. But they teach us to reason well, as Mr. Locke observes, and are therefore of infinite service, in a profession where the good of mankind is so intimately interested in the justness of our sentiments. Logic and metaphysics have the same tendency, and in the manner in which of late years they have been studied, are of the utmost consequence in this profession, are the ground-work of just and candid reasoning, and will perhaps constitute the foundation of every future thing. These principles of science, strip-

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ped of the unnatural garb, with which they have till of late been invested, will be esteemed as long as common sense can preserve its power: for now they belong entirely to her train, and are the careful hand-maids which conduct her through the paths of knowledge. Common sense may be introduced into medical, as well as any other science. But till of late years every theory of physic hath been adopted by the mechanical school, and lines and figures have been instituted to account for actions which seem to depend entirely on an animated principle: Since mechanics have been well understood, they have excluded medicine from their cognifance. For as a false theory embraced it, the true one relinquished it entirely, and gave it over to principles upon which mechanism could exert no influence.

Natural philosophy should not be neglected by the physician. There are parts of medical knowledge, viz. every thing which

which relates to drugs which depend upon it, and there are many other parts which bear a very striking analogy with the common phænomena of nature. The principles of this science likewise reign throughout the creation; all matter is governed by them, and the animal body, when considered in its native form, must belong to them, and be governed by them likewise. Thus the human mind, tho' it can act upon the corporeal limbs, yet cannot act upon the gravity of its nature.

The principles of moral philosophy should likewise be studied by a physician, with a considerable accuracy, not to make him a better man only than he would otherwise be, but that he may be fully acquainted with the power and dispositions of the human soul. Physicians in general have not sufficiently studied the human mind; and indeed it hath been a study which has been much neglected in our universities, and other places of scholastic dis-

discipline. A fatal mistake which has induced much error, and prevented many valuable discoveries. I am in hopes, however, that your son will be induced to cultivate this study; and to this purpose give me leave to recommend to him a very valuable system, which in my opinion hath no equal. It is that of professor *Hutcheson* of *Glasgow*. A man who, for his many amiable qualities and his upright disposition of mind, gained the friendship of his numerous pupils. And who unfortunately likewise gained some enemies, who envied his superior feelings, and from the malevolence or mistaken zeal of their hearts opposed a system which breathed only peace and good will to mankind.

I am, &c.

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L E T T E R VI.

DEAR SIR,

I Concluded my last letter by recommending the study of morality, to the attention of a young gentleman, intended for the practice of physic. You will think it needless, therefore, that I should begin with recommending a study of his religious obligations to his care. And yet you will agree with me, in thinking it too important a subject to be passed over in silence. I have already encouraged, in the strongest terms, a religious and sober education in his earliest years; and I have encouraged, likewise, the study of morality in those which are more mature. But these are not always sufficient guards against infidelity, which is too apt to insinuate its poison, at a period of our lives, when our passions are very powerful, and the best efforts of our reason hardly sufficient to controul them. A
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sober education, you may say, will create that serious temper that will incline to what is decent and becoming, under every garb ; and morality will confirm its persuasions, whilst it endows with reason, and with sentiment. The first, however, may be over-ruled by the vivacity and spirit of youth ; and the latter may be thought sufficient to conduct us through the path of life. Many divines (I may call them injudicious in this particular) have separated religion and morality from each other. But the best divinity, which is that of the scriptures, shews us the strongest alliance between them. And I am certain that if young persons, at the same time that they study the morality of the schools, or that much better system which I mentioned in my last letter, were to read and to study in the original those very valuable writings which we find in the New Testament, we should have but little infidelity in the world. For whatever a man's private opinions might be, he would be ashamed

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to avow them, when they were repugnant to good sense, and the original principles of human nature. This then is the religion, which I would wish a young physician to study. And with this religion I believe he would be rendered fully capable, as far as conscience can influence him, to perform his duty in the world, and promote the interest of his fellow-creatures, in that profession which he has chosen for his future employment.

I will proceed now to shew you, how far the polite arts are necessary in the education of a physician. You will say, nothing that is polite should be omitted by a person whose manners should be as polished as possible. It is true. And I would recommend all these arts to his consideration in some degree, to understand them as a gentleman, not to practise them as a proficient. By that he might be led aside from more important studies, might neglect that strict attention

to his patients, which is occasionally necessary, and expose himself to the contempt and ridicule of mankind. To have a soul susceptible of the sounds of harmony, is an accomplishment very necessary in a person, whose sensibility should be tuned with the most tender feelings of his fellow creatures. In the same manner a taste for sculpture, and paintings, and architecture, and poetry, and history, &c. coincides with that delicacy of sentiment, which is essential to one who should suffer no care to pass away unnoticed, no distress to be neglected or forsaken.

We have now I think furnished a young gentleman with many preparatory studies, and indeed with as much employment, perhaps, as would occupy the whole of his time, if they were to be pursued as ends rather than as the means of attaining any other profession. They should occupy him then at this time, so much as to gain all that he ought to require of them, that they may be almost laid aside, when
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he enters upon the study of physic, or retained in such a manner, as that when he chuses to renew them, he may do it with pleasure. But there is a part of education, which may be thought more immediately to belong to this profession than any that I have mentioned, and about which you have entertained some serious thoughts. Allow me then to give my sentiments freely upon this subject which you may have thought, indeed, that I have forgotten, but which I have remembered, I hope in time to shew my respect for you, by discussing the argument fairly and with precision.

It was the first question almost that you asked me, when you began to think of breeding your son a physician, whether it would not be proper previously to place him in an apothecary's shop, that he might understand the nature of drugs, and that he might learn how to prescribe. I cannot avoid shewing you my aversion to this proposal, upon many accounts, but

especially because he will be far from acquiring what you think he can acquire no where else. With respect to the knowledge of drugs, it is impossible he should ever know more than their colour, their form, their consistence, their taste, &c. But whence can he derive a knowledge of their uses in medicine? he never sees the patient for whom they are prescribed; and, unless in some general evacuations, the physician seldom intimates the use for which a medicine is generally designed. He may, indeed, know how to mix a medicine elegantly, but that may depend so much on his own peculiar neatness, that when he comes to order himself, he may find others cannot execute as he did; and thus all his labour will be lost, and he very much mortified, but by no means improved by a seven years attendance.

With regard to the art of prescribing, I may say it is the most trifling part of a physician's care. If the indications of
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cure are well known, a physician who thinks, and can read, will soon find a medicine which will every way answer his purpose. And that readiness of prescribing which shall preclude such an attention will be of little avail. It may render a man indolent, it can never make him industrious. But, besides, he may inhabit many shops, where he may never see an elegant prescription; and if he do, may not have that clue to it, which shall tell him, where the elegance and where the utility of it may reside. There have been physicians who have prescribed medicines that would not mix together; but there have been others, who have prescribed very elegantly, but have left out the ingredient which alone would be efficacious, ordered it in so small a quantity as can be of no use. But there are some very important objections to this scheme, provided these other purposes could be answered with satisfaction. 1. He must neglect all those previous studies, which I have recommended; they are suf-

ficient to engage the utmost attention, and require the direction of proper tutors. Can this be done when the greatest part of his time is engaged in a mere mechanical employment, when he is rambling about the streets, or occupied behind a shop-chest? By no means. With regard to these studies then, it offers this alternative, whether they shall be cultivated in that gentleman-like manner, which I shall endeavour to point out, or be exchanged, for what with a little industry may be repaired. 2. He sees business in the most unfavourable light, he views it in a tremendous prospect. All that is agreeable in it is excluded from his sight, and the disagreeable parts only are exhibited to him. This puts him out of humour with it, and he enters upon the proper studies with fewer advantages than any other person. For, 3. he carries with him a thousand prejudices, according to the place where he has been educated; and if he has any idea of practice which he has anticipated, he often de-

despises the valuable studies upon which all good practice must be founded. 4. Being subjected to a master, perhaps a tyrannical one, for a number of years, he does not engage in the study with that openness of behaviour, that manly freedom, and that spirit of enquiry, which is peculiarly necessary to this study when it appears in a philosophical garb.

I am, &c.

LETTER VII.

DEAR SIR,

FROM my last letter I hope you will see the propriety of attending to no kind of education which will not include in it that of the scholar, and the gentleman. How such is to be attained will be the subject of our next enquiry. And here a vast field is open before us. Some preferring that of our own universities, others that of foreign countries. We may call our own of two kinds, the English and the Scotch. The Scotch, however, differ very much from the English in their mode of education. Let us make a division of three kinds, and consider the merits of each. As Englishmen, we should be fond of those of our native country, and we may acquire in them a great deal of knowledge, may be benefited by the conversation of many learned persons, and cultivate a ve-

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ry useful and agreeable acquaintance. But we may at the same time indulge a great deal of indolence, and contract many vicious habits. There is a very strong objection likewise to them, from their method of educating. For here we are not to seek instruction from a variety of lectures read by learned persons of observation, and experience in the different branches of literature. A single tutor teaches every thing we are to know, except what is to be derived from our own observations. Knowledge may be acquired, but it must be sought, through a most extensive labyrinth, in which it is enveloped. This education may satisfy the Gentleman, who has leisure to improve his time, or the Divine, whose business consists very much in argumentation. But to the physician, who should be employed only in the knowledge of things, it can be of little or no advantage. It can be of no advantage in the studies we have already mentioned, because he hath not time sufficiently to attend

tend to them ; and it must be of much less advantage in the study of physic, because the tutors, seldom educated to this profession, know little of it, and the professorships are mere sine-cures. Let us next examine the Scotch universities, and of these there is only one which can be considered as thoroughly qualified for this branch of education. The rest may make good philosophers, and sound divines, but Edinburgh alone is appropriated to the study of physic, and in this it excels every other university in Europe. How far it is fitted for the sciences I have already mentioned, I will not determine. They may be learnt, some in a scholastic, others in a rational and intelligent manner. Natural and moral philosophy, and the mathematics with rhetoric, are taught in an eminent degree of perfection. But logic and metaphysics with the languages are confined to the antient plan. Besides this, there is a considerable objection to breeding a very young man in this university, before his years have given him a

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considerable degree of discretion. It is the loose and undisciplined method of living among the students. Subjected to no controul, and influenced by no director, they are allowed to attend to their studies or to neglect them, and a professor is but little interested in the proficiencies they make, or the industry with which they employ their time. This would require a private tutor. And that is the method which the Scotch themselves adopt, or, being present upon the spot, are themselves the guardians of the conduct of their children. Another objection to the Scotch universities, is the want of an agreeable society. It may be thought expedient for a physician, not only after he is entered into practice, but during the whole course of his education, to cultivate a genteel and useful acquaintance, to polish his manners, that he may appear in the world with reputation, and to ingratiate himself into the favour of persons of character, that he may properly be introduced into practice. In the
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Scotch universities nothing of this kind can be done. Most of the students are associates in the same branch of knowledge, and when separated may never meet again. And tho' the first benefit of a genteel acquaintance may be in some measure answered by some families of the country, yet the last can never be expected.

These disadvantages will be much more considerable in the universities of foreign countries; there, indeed, nothing can be derived from company. And the professors in these places are not of that reputation, with which we regard physicians. They are chosen from the meanest and most idle of the people. The sciences likewise are taught in a high scholastic method, and religion interferes very much with a free enquiry, particularly on mathematical and metaphysical subjects. Physic indeed is well taught in them; they have most excellent professors, and their large hospitals are of considerable
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utility. If I should recommend them to any one, it would be to a dull plodding genius, who required a long time to gain a proficiency in the art, and had leisure enough to procure it without inconvenience.

But neither of these places alone will, I think, absolutely suit you, who would chuse to have your son as perfectly qualified as possible. Give me leave then, for the benefit of recollection, to give you a summary of the advantages of each, and then shew the proper scheme of education. For the advantages of a good acquaintance and genteel behaviour, our universities must claim the preference; for the study of medicine in the most judicious and expeditious manner, I should esteem the university of Edinburgh; and for those who would chuse to spend much time in it, those of foreign nations. But where shall we find the place of instruction for those studies we have already recommended? And the only resource that I can find

find is in some of those academies, where the dissenting ministers of this kingdom are educated, and where morality and metaphysics are peculiarly encouraged, and judiciously taught; and where mathematics and natural philosophy are likewise to be learnt, but not in that extensive manner, as where a great variety of instruments are provided. For these we must have recourse to public institutions.

Upon the whole, I think the following sketch will answer the purpose of your son. Let him, till he is fourteen years of age, acquire as much classical knowledge as he can, or adhere to that branch of education, till he is a perfect proficient in it. From that time to seventeen, or for three years, I would send him to one of those academies I mentioned; and here he would learn, or be put in a good track for learning morality and logic, and mathematics and natural philosophy.—From that time till the age of twenty, or till he had taken a bachelor's degree, he should

should reside at one of our universities, and improve himself in those sciences which he had already learnt, and gain every thing in his power from conversation and acquaintance. He should then spend four years at Edinburgh, studying nothing but medicine, and natural philosophy. And by this, I imagine that at the age of twenty four, or at furthest twenty seven, he would become a complete scholar, philosopher, and physician.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R VIII.

D E A R S I R,

IN my last letter I brought the young gentleman, who had chosen the profession of physic, to the verge of that study, with which he must qualify himself for future employment. I shall now conduct him through his schools of medicine in the best manner I am able. And here I must again solicit the utmost of your candour ; and hope you will consider that if I fail in my advice, it is by your particular orders that I have been induced to give it. Here it is that we find the greatest difficulty. For this is the foundation upon which all future knowledge must be built. An error here then is of infinite consequence, and can never be repaired. We take into our hands a tender shoot, which is susceptible of any direction we may be disposed to give it. We may give it such as will bear fruit, or be for ever barren and unpro-

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profitable. Of such consequence are impressions made in the younger part of life. To neglect all kind of advice, however, would be not only a mark of contempt, but a breach of friendship. I must proceed therefore, altho' with fear and terror, to give such directions as appear best to me, and which notwithstanding I did not follow exactly myself in my own education; yet I must always wish I had been acquainted with a proper director, who could have instructed me in them. We often observe errors in our conduct, when it is too late to offer the remedy.

A young man, when he first enters upon this study, is lost in a labyrinth of opinions. He knows not whom to chuse to be his friends; and those he fixes upon are often too ignorant how to instruct him, or too indolent to do it properly. Should he consult other gentlemen of the same profession, he labours under two inconveniencies, arising from

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the ages of the different persons whom he may advise with. If they are old, they direct him to a scheme which may be quite obsolete ; and they can never be so young, as to accommodate him properly to the studies which are chiefly in vogue, or direct to those which are most of use. If they are so young as just to have left the study themselves, they are too fond of studies to which they have formed an attachment, and are ignorant how far they will bear the test of experiment. If you consult the professors of the art, they will always plead in favour of those parts of which themselves are the teachers. They will naturally give the preference to that which they have adopted as their favorite, whilst they decry those which have not been bestowed upon them. And if they approve any other study, they will naturally envy the professor. You see then how many difficulties I throw in the way, and how glad I should be to be excused from so important a task. But to proceed.

The first year, in my humble opinion, should be spent in natural philosophy, anatomy, and chemistry. The first of these we may suppose the student previously in some measure to be acquainted with. We have strongly recommended his attention to it; anatomy depends much upon it, and will not only be more easily conceived, but strengthened by it. Chemistry likewise is a part of it, and will be much more easily understood by an acquaintance with this science. No student should ever enter upon a medical education but by means of anatomy; for it is the foundation of all knowledge of this kind; it teaches what is the structure of the body, and how and where medicines must act upon it. To be without such a knowledge would be a great disgrace to a physician; to enjoy it as an adept can be no dishonour to him, and may sometimes be of the greatest utility. Chemistry likewise is a study of infinite consequence.

By this you are acquainted with the active powers of medicines, as by anatomy you perceive the passive powers of that body upon which they act. The respective relations too of these substances to each other cannot be known but by this science; and the cookery of medicine is so much dependent upon it, that the best physicians, without such a knowledge, must be subject to perpetual blunders in the art of prescribing. These studies will be quite sufficient for his attention during the first year of his education. They will employ enough of his time, and they will not confound his ideas with subjects of a quite opposite nature. In the summer of this year he should study botany, and natural history. Studies of much consequence to him, as a philosopher and gentleman, and by which the distinctions of different drugs can only be discovered.

The next year he may add to chemistry and anatomy, which he should still pursue,

pursue, the study of physiology. He may likewise this year enter himself as a pupil at the Royal Infirmary; and, tho' he will be able to see little which may inform his mind with any thing relative to a judicious practice, he may entertain those general ideas, which will make it more familiar to him, when he comes to study it in a more particular manner. Physiology is no more than the general principles of anatomy reduced to a system, and illustrations in the living body of what were seen in the dissections of a dead one. Anatomy should be pursued this year, not only because one course of lectures is insufficient for a particular information, but because the student will have the dissection of the parts recent in the memory, whose functions are explained by the physiological professor. The advantages of attending chemistry this year will be very apparent, that the student may be more accurately acquainted with science, upon which so much depends, and which he cannot sufficiently learn in one year's

attendance. It will lead him likewise to another study upon which he may enter this season; and that is the *materia medica*, or the doctrine of drugs more particularly. By this he will know medicines when he sees them; and he will, in some measure, become acquainted with their properties on the body. This he should afterwards pursue every year in which he resides in the university.

The third year he should enter upon practice, and, as the great end for which every other study was cultivated, should apply to it with the greatest diligence. For this purpose he should attend the professor of practice, the infirmary and the clinical lectures. But he should not neglect this year his physiology, lest by that means the foundation upon which the practice is built might be too much obliterated from his mind.—The clinical lectures may be said to be of the greatest importance of any other, because they exhibit to our experience lively instances
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of what are taught in theory. But they cannot be attended with that advantage, as when the rules of practice have been first laid down, and the reasons of symptoms justly assigned. The clinical lectures, read at the bed of the patient, or from notes collected there, exhibit a series of facts; but these facts seem more plausible, when from the nature of the disease we are taught to expect them, can account for their origin, and predict the tendency of the progress. The fourth year should be spent as the third, in an accurate attention to practice, which will then be more mature, and in a careful review of every study which is subservient to it.—Anatomy, chemistry, physiology, the materia medica and the practice, should be all cultivated now to occupy the mind, and as much as possible to strengthen every notion which was before acquired.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R IX.

DEAR SIR,

THE great and important benefits of a physician's education being, I hope, obtained by the method I have pointed out to you, the next thing will be to teach him his public character, or to instruct him in the means by which he is first to gain business in his profession, and then to keep it with security and satisfaction.—To obtain it, and to keep it by honourable arts, is all we will pretend to teach him. Let others do as they think fit, let them practise as many tricks and fancies as they please, I am persuaded I should disgust you with the character, rather than induce you to an imitation, if I should exhibit them to you. There is an honourable stile of behaviour to be supported in every profession, as well as the contrary; and I am sensible I please you, whilst I gratify my own

own feelings, by shewing you how much more agreeable it is to gain approbation by the former, rather than by the latter conduct. In the practice of physick both must be attended to in extremes. Every one who attempts to please, must either be an honest man from the integrity of his heart, or a hypocrite from the baseness of it. A mediocrity of character is hardly to be supported. If he believe the profession to be of advantage to society, he will be sincere in his intentions to promote it upon a rational foundation. If he believe the contrary, his whole conduct must be directed by the deepest dissimulation. He cannot at the same time practise it and despise it openly. But there is a test by which we may always judge of an upright and honest disposition. And this must be derived from the consistency and propriety of our behaviour in every circumstance of life, in which we may be engaged. Whoever is a slave to vicious habits, will order his conduct agreeably to the first impressions of objects upon

upon his mind; and tho' sometimes he may become passionate to the last degree, at other times he will be cruel, lascivious and oppressive. But the person who is governed by rational and consistent principles, will upon no occasion admit ~~his~~ passion *the* to overrule his better reflections, lest mankind should be led to imagine his good conduct was entirely artificial, and be afraid of trusting to his reason after he had once relinquished its influence.

We may suppose, however, that an honest man may practise the profession of medicine, and, by the cultivation of every moral virtue, may secure himself a considerable degree of attention. And the first virtue which seems to me necessary for him to cultivate is that of humility. A physician is much more, as has been already observed, a citizen of the world perhaps than the member of any other profession; he is engaged more intimately with the concerns of mankind, and he sees them at a time when all kind of
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anxiety is of no importance, and of consequence is deserted by them. Upon such an occasion to assume only a moderate degree of pride would be highly disgusting, and might occasion the loss of a very valuable member of society. That modest and humble temper, which is seldom seen, but always ingratiates a person into the attention of his fellow creatures ; cherishes the mind of a desponding patient, whilst it indicates the anxiety of a heart which is never secure at such times even under the direction of the most improved understanding. If pride be not made for man, it is certainly very ill fitted for one who is to deal with mankind under every disagreeable circumstance, is to submit to their foibles, and study the worst part of their characters. *To do good* should be the reigning motto of every physician. He is educated in this profession for no other end. To relieve then every one who is indisposed, and calls upon him for assistance, is the only means by which this can be maintained.

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Shall he enjoy then an opportunity of chusing to whom he will afford his help, whilst he desert and forsake those who are equally the object of his care? Or shall he ever presume upon the confidence of his abilities, to leave his patients to nature, whose laws he may perhaps have thwarted, because they cannot satisfy his pride, or indulge his indolence?

There is nothing in the profession of physic which can justly encourage our pride. There may be something to increase our insolence, because we see we have so much in our power. But to every thinking and conscientious man, it must be a very humiliating thought, to see so many desponding wretches groaning under evils of whose cure we are quite uncertain, and leading miserable lives, whilst our hopes flatter them with some further degree of happiness. We see their misery, while we prolong it. We can seldom be so proud of our knowledge as to insure their future health. This
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may afford indeed a dismal prospect to mankind, and lessen the importance of medicine to a great degree. It may lessen it to a superficial person, who thinks he knows more than can possibly be obtained; but it will have a very different effect upon you, who have thoroughly considered these matters. The art of physic, if it may be called an art, is of considerable use, as it can relieve pain, and render life in some degree comfortable and easy, under the most threatening complaints. But whoever presumes to secure absolutely the duration of our existence, acts a dishonourable part, at the same time he prostitutes his abilities in supposing it within his power. Physicians do what they can to preserve their patients, but they can never be certain of success. And whoever pretends to such a knowledge, in any period of a disease, is either ignorant or presumptuous. I would ~~o~~ther pronounce him ignorant; for by the other quality he would know that at the same time he

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subjected himself to the censure of mankind, who judge of a physician rather from his success, than his knowledge. I would therefore wish to inculcate this maxim upon every physician, but much more upon those who just set out in life, to be as humble as possible, to pronounce with diffidence where their opinion is asked, and never to presume to give it where it be not required of them.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R X.

DEAR SIR,

MY last letter was upon the humility of a physician. But the general arguments in favour of this amiable virtue are so strong and powerful, and you have been always so attentive to inforce them in your family, and they are so necessarily connected with that modest disposition, which I before recommended, that it was hardly necessary to mention it to you. To have omitted it, however, would have shewn a contempt for a quality for which you have so great an esteem, and might have persuaded you, that I favoured the contrary disposition. I have at least then shewn my approbation of it, if I have advanced no new arguments in its favour.

The virtue or character which I intend shall employ your present attention,
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is much less understood, and but little cultivated. It is so little cultivated, that moralists and divines, who are instituted to teach us our duty, have not generally included it in the calendar of virtue. This character, which I suppose you are anxious to be acquainted with, is delicacy, which some have imagined to consist in a mere cast of the mind, or natural disposition, and have allowed but little merit in the observance of it. But I have always thought it was a superior kind of virtue to what most men imagine, that whoever enjoys it must enjoy a mind that despises every low and grovelling pursuit, and whilst he is ashamed of vice, will abhor it with the utmost detestation. I have some very peculiar, or at least some very powerful sentiments upon this subject. These I beg leave to display to you, and then shew you how highly becoming they are the character of a physician.

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Delicacy of sentiments, is borrowed in name, from an analogy with a high refinement of our natural powers, in what is called delicacy of taste, which consists in a perfect judgement, or an accurate attention to the agreeable objects of nature which surround us, and to those arts by which they are imitated or improved. We may see many of these things with the eyes of a philosopher, or a critic ; but nature gives us that delicacy which discovers some peculiar beauties, which would otherwise have been overlooked or neglected. It is the same in some measure with our moral dispositions. To be virtuous and good, is natural, and is generally approved ; but there is a peculiarity of sentiment we enjoy which soars above this approbation, and actuates our minds with a superior degree of veneration towards moral objects. The beauty of virtue may not be so easily perceived as the utility of it. But when once it be discovered, it is so alluring

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luring an object as to rivet our affections to it entirely.

To cultivate this disposition or character is not so difficult as some may apprehend, neither does it depend upon a peculiar genius of the mind, which cannot without some industry be obtained. A delicacy of taste in natural objects we may allow is far beyond the reach of human art to acquire, and yet a high degree of attention in a mind which is very much improved may almost arrive at it. But moral objects are in some measure different; and, without any superior taste, we may discern the excellency of beauties of this kind. The reason of the distinction, if I may presume upon the conjecture, is this; in one case there is no necessary connection between the utility and the beauty of the objects; but in the other, the strongest relation of this kind is preserved. The most beautiful flower which blows in the garden of nature, may be unaccompanied with any
utility

utility to mankind, and we admire it merely for the elegance of its appearance. But in moral objects beauty and utility accompany each other. We may be sensible of the latter, without the former ; but that necessarily implies the latter as its associate. A sense of duty, for instance, excited by fear, may engage us in every useful action, whilst a love for our fellow creatures is a stranger to our bosoms. But a benevolent heart towards those who are our companions in life must incite us to do them good, whilst it corresponds to the settled principles of virtue. And in this I imagine consists that delicacy which I have endeavoured to describe. It may arise from a fear of doing, or speaking any thing which might injure the peace of our neighbour's breast. Such a principle must always arise from benevolence, but it must arise from benevolence which is dependent on good-sense, and assisted by thought and reflection. Benevolence may be, and I believe is in general, a na-

tural disposition of the mind, yet uncultivated and unimproved, it can hardly ever be productive of delicacy of sentiment. It teaches us how to feel, but without this affection, we can hardly ever be directed to the proper objects of compassion, or know how to distinguish the true feelings of the heart, from that general sympathy which affects us but little. Let us then give such a definition of this virtue as will include in it a benevolent heart joined to a comprehensive and refined understanding, a heart which feels for the distresses of mankind, and knows in what manner to afford them relief; where happiness may be found, and what will create misery, a fear of offending, and a knowledge of disagreeable objects.

A physician perhaps of all other men is more intimately concerned with this virtue, and is more obliged to the observance of it. Happy state! when solicited to the support of such an amiable cha-

character both from nature and his profession ! He is not like a lawyer, to distress one party as much as possible, whilst he supports the other ; nor like a divine, to alarm the fears of those who act contrary to the principles of virtue. He is to prevent every agitation of the mind, whilst he operates for the relief of the body. He is of all persons then to study, what will occasion the distress, and what will communicate by gentle usage to the recovery of his patients. There is one peculiar circumstance, which must always alarm the delicacy of every physician, and involve him in many difficulties. It is this, whether he is to warn a dying man of his danger. I would, for my own part, wish never to do it ; and for this reason, that it will always agitate the spirits, and destroy that little hope which may be left, even in the most desperate circumstances. To him who wishes to die, because it will deprive the world of an amiable member of society ; for none but such generally wish for a

dissolution. To him who is unfit to die, because it hurries him to a state for which he is unprepared; but this I leave to the Divines, and

Am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R XI.

D E A R S I R,

TO know that mankind are not equally happy ; to know that distress and misery, pain and uneasiness, are the portion and familiar friends of many of our fellow creatures ; to know that none of us are absolutely exempted from mental and corporeal sorrows ; and that sickness and death are the universal lot of humanity ; are common maxims which the general experience of mankind hath taught them. A physician is most intimately acquainted with them, whilst he subsists upon the profits which arise from the distresses of the rest of the world. We have naturally dispositions to relieve, which correspond to the objects of misery which present themselves to us ; and as an acquaintance with them influences our knowledge, so it should influence our affections likewise. But our humanity

is not always engaged in proportion to our knowledge. Where the objects increase beyond a certain proportion, or beyond a determinate degree, they occasion carelessness and inattention. By too frequent a repetition of things of the same nature, we become insensible of their real value ; and minute circumstances are often disregarded, whilst we attend only to those of greater importance. This is the case very often with physicians. They feel like other men for the distresses of their fellow creatures in uncommon cases ; but in the more frequent symptoms of a disorder, although sufficiently painful and urgent to the patient, they lose that sensibility which is highly becoming this profession, and their characters as men. This fault is so considerable, that it is worthy a very particular attention, and should be carefully avoided by every one who would wish to do justice to his fellow creatures, and do honour to himself. So far from being less humane than the rest of mankind, a
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physician should be infinitely more so. They often see objects at a great distance; and many, except in some few and rare instances, seldom know what real pain and uneasiness bring along with them. He sees them, or ought to see them, in the most conspicuous light; and if he has judgment sufficient for practice, should know the tendency of every symptom. They grieve, even in the most severe cases, for the loss of a friend alone; but he perhaps may have occasion to grieve for his own negligence, as well as the common loss which is sustained.

This makes such a difference, that I am surprized a humane disposition is not more cultivated. Give me leave to shew it's advantages, in some few instances. In the first place, it engages the attention of a physician. The more distress we feel for any of our friends, whilst we have a power to relieve them, the more urgent we shall be to discover every means by which we may contribute
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to their ease and comfort. We shall search every author, cull every receipt, and examine every opinion which is offered to our inspection, in order to discover some new facts which may answer the desired purpose. Humanity will actuate our diligence and industry, and that industry will be productive of some useful sentiment.—In the second place, humanity comforts our minds, at the same time indeed that it increases our grief; it comforts us to find that our diligence hath been exhausted, to discover what may be of benefit to our patient, and that the will of providence, not our neglect, hath fixed his fate. But it afflicts us to think that we must be deprived of a very valuable member of the community, and that our skill can have no power of redeeming him from destruction. In the third place, it satisfies the minds of those persons who may employ us. Carelessness and inattention are the last faculties mankind would wish for, in a physician, and the best security we can
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give them of our care, is in the anxiety and humanity of our behaviour. These ~~afflictions~~ afflictions necessarily lead to thought and reflection, they are their most powerful spurs. Men know this, and think themselves secure in those physicians whom they see subservient to them.

There may be persons of great humanity, who have an awkward method of shewing it to the rest of mankind; they should endeavour then, always to make their behaviour correspond to their real sentiments, because such a kind of behaviour may be attended with great benefit to the persons who may employ them. It cheers their minds, and every one who knows any thing of medicine, will acknowledge the excellency of cheerfulness and good humour, in every fit of sickness. They assist the operation of every medicine, and destroy the violent efforts of a disease. Besides, to know that a physician feels for the distress of his

his patients, and that this will engage his utmost industry, relieves the anxiety of those who attend upon the sick man's bed, and excites them to do their duty towards him with greater alacrity, and with greater care. There are some inhuman wretches, who, when they become acquainted with the fate of a friend, often neglect the proper duties which should be paid him in his last moments. This inhumanity is often encouraged by the physician, who sets the example; and when he pronounces his sentence, determines the behaviour of all who act under his command.

The means by which we ought to shew our humanity in the practice of physic, will be easily understood by those who have not endeavoured to obliterate the tender passions from their minds. If there should be any who would wish to inculcate humanity as an artificial principle; let them take care, that their words and their actions correspond to the circum-

cumstances they observe. If death really stare them in the face, let them pronounce his approach with caution and with concern; let them demonstrate, with tenderness, where the danger lies, that by the best means it may, if possible, be prevented; and let them shew, with readiness, what hope may be derived, and suppress, if possible, all sentiments of despair. In case of recovery, let them wish to ease the patient's anxiety, as soon as possible; and let them warn the attendant friends in such a manner, that whatever accidents may fall out, their humanity or attention may never be reproached. Humanity, let me say it, in finishing this letter, is a most amiable virtue; but is never so worthy our admiration and our praise, as when it shines forth in the hearts of those who have abilities to exercise it.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R XII.

D E A R S I R,

THE subject of the following letter, I am persuaded, is so agreeable to your natural disposition, and to that character which you would always wish to assume, that I need ask for no apology in the introduction of it, unless an attempt to instruct in a subject, with which you are so well acquainted, require an excuse. It hath often been canvassed both by men of the world, and philosophers, (I will not say by divines, because they may be supposed too much interested in the dispute,) whether physicians should be religious men, or pay any regard to the ordinances of public worship. They have often been accused of a character repugnant to every principle, by which of all men they should be directed, and they have encouraged many a libertine in profaneness and immorality.

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For it is natural for those, who would wish the ruling principles of their conduct to be consonant to their practices, however vicious, to screen themselves under the shelter of persons, whom they observe esteemed for knowledge and good sense. And this because they justly imagine, that an enquiry into the nature of the human constitution should instruct them in the principles of natural religion.

But give me leave to justify physicians from the general censure, and shew the reasons why infidelity has been fathered upon them. For that they have partaken of it's poison, and encouraged it in others, can never be denied.

If we carefully examine what true religion is, whether under the character of a scheme of duty immediately revealed from the Almighty, or as a system of right and just actions which nature and reason concur in displaying to our minds ;

we shall find that every one who studies much, and informs himself of the ways of the world, will embrace it only as it is agreeable to the general principles by which mankind are disposed to be actuated. If he should perceive, that mankind were enemies to each other, and that they desired the destruction rather than the welfare of their fellow creatures, whatever appealed to the benevolence of his heart, he would esteem as spurious, and would imagine the disposition which he might feel within him, to relieve or prevent distress, was fallacious, and ought to be avoided. But if he saw the mutual dependencies, on the contrary, which mankind have upon one another, if he knew their happiness, nay their being, could only be supported by their mutual assistance, and if he felt within himself, and discovered in others, an irresistible desire of doing good and benevolent offices; he would naturally abhor every principle, which could engage him in a conduct exclusive of goodwill.

will. The result of attention then in every thinking man, must be to embrace every thing which is advantageous, whilst he rejects every thing that is prejudicial to society. When religion appears under the amiable character of the friend of mankind, he readily acknowledges it's influence, and cherishes it in his bosom. When it restrains the principles of conscience and of good-nature ; when it respects the private interest of a few violent persons ; when it regards enthusiasm rather than good sense ; and when it attempts to dictate by fire and sword, rather than to persuade by sober reasoning, and allure by benevolent actions ; he will embrace it through fear, or reject it through fortitude and resolution. Thus the coward believes, and trembles, whilst the man of spirit is guided only by the integrity of his persuasions.

Religion has hardly ever appeared in a truly rational garb. It has been generally too much under the dominion of

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priests,

priests, or under the restraint of some political form of government. Physicians join with others in viewing it in this disagreeable light, and consider it as a craft, by which the imaginations of men are deceived, and their credulity nourished, whilst they neglect an attention to the friendly disposition of it's nature, and the genuine effects it was intended to produce. Besides, physicians are necessarily led to a neglect of that external attention to religion, which credulous persons think of so much consequence in a religious conduct. This, however, depends entirely upon accident, and this character should be always exempted from example. As religion comes to be better understood, and to be studied from the scriptures rather than from the opinions of men, the minds of physicians will be better instructed, and the *mind* of mankind will be enlarged to see that times and seasons, places and opportunities, are differently adapted to the circumstances of our lives.

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But for a physician to appear an irreligious or immoral man, is a mark of weakness of understanding, as well as profligacy of sentiment, and impolicy of behaviour. If he chuse to think, he will naturally think aright, and this attention will induce him to view things in their proper light; and a want of attention in an affair of such consequence, will prevail upon mankind to discredit his attention with respect to his peculiar employment. But, besides, policy requires that a physician should conform to the opinions of mankind; and I hope I shall not offend, if I encourage his attention to do what is right, tho' the prevailing motives refer only to his worldly interest. At least, I think it better than being honestly vicious. I would be far from desiring a physician to conform to all the superstitious rites, or enthusiastic forms of devotion, which may offer to his imagination. But I could wish that every one, who desires to profit by this profession,

sion, would cultivate the character of a worthy and honest citizen, friendly to mankind, and grateful to his God. This can only be acquired by giving a sanction to the most rational religion which his country permits, and by the display of every principle which may endear him to society, and engage him their sincerest regards. This is all I would wish to say in favour of an attendance on public worship. It is necessary to support a decent community, it is rational entertainment to an intelligent man, it may be improving to every character ; and it is an act of gratitude in a thinking mind.

I am, &c.

LET-

L E T T E R XIII.

DEAR SIR,

IN some of the last letters which I have written to you, I have given you some reasons for a physician's cultivating those moral principles which will be ornamental to him as a man, as well as of the last importance in the profession which he espouses. I will now attempt a description of those *traits* in his character which are peculiarly adapted to his situation. If he think, even under the sanction of the most upright character, that he can live and act as other men, or rather as other gentlemen, he will be egregiously mistaken. Every employment requires a different external behaviour, but every dependent employment demands a strict attention to some peculiar modes of it. And this not only out of compliance with the whims and caprice of mankind, but is absolutely essential to our welfare, and to that inte-

grity which every honest man would wish to support. It is as much our duty perhaps to maintain an artificial character in many professions in life, as to support a moral character in our general conduct. A certain degree of volatility, which is so far from being immoral, that it is an ornament to a young person who has no cares to intrude upon his peace, no anxiety to distract his mind, and whose attention to the ills of men could issue in a small degree of relief; would be highly improper and worthy of censure in him, whose sole business it is to hearken to the distresses of his fellow creatures, and who enjoys within himself a power of serving their best interests.

This is always the case with a physician. The anxiety which he ought to indulge, should incline him to be grave, and should induce him to put on every appearance to persuade mankind that he is full of thought. The great business
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of every physician is, to think; and there is enough to employ the utmost of his abilities in the cares which are laid before him. The great art then which he is to cultivate is, not to disguise his real character, but to make mankind believe that he is scrupulously attentive to the ruling principles of his conduct. Every thing in external behaviour, in manners or in dress, which can contribute to this purpose, he should encourage as much as possible. Not indeed to discover artifice, or affect grimace. This would shew the result of a bad disposition, which can cultivate the apparent, whilst it neglects the real qualifications of the profession. To suffer physicians to act like other persons, would allow too loose a method of behaviour; to affect any thing very peculiar, would impose on the credulity of mankind, and distinguish a party spirit. Extremes in every case should be avoided. But yet I think physicians should in some measure be distinguished from the rest of mankind, in their behaviour, in their

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dress,

dress, and in their different associations. In the first place, their behaviour should differ very widely from that of the free and independent gentleman ; and, although every thing stiff and unnatural should be discouraged, yet a peculiar gravity and seriousness are highly becoming. The character of humility, and a modest disposition, will indeed discourage every thing assuming, but there is something besides these necessary to this profession. To be humble as a servant would be ridiculous, and occasion contempt ; to be assuming as a man of fashion would be impertinent, and occasion neglect. There is a character between both these which may be taken up and supported with propriety.

We may imagine that with medical improvements, and the studies previous to them, we have acquired a knowledge which raises us high above the rest of mankind. To presume upon such acquisitions will be of no advantage, for the world will incline to it's own opinion,

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rather than ours, and we cannot be sure that it will be so well satisfied with our abilities, as we ourselves may be. But if, on the contrary, we form too mean and inconsiderable ideas of ourselves, and if this occasion too great a retirement from the world, mankind will naturally fall in with our ideas, and be far from esteeming us for faculties of which we ourselves are diffident. To put on, therefore, that behaviour which is becoming persons of a liberal education, and of attentive minds, who know their importance in society, but will not perfume upon it, constitutes, in my opinion, the true principles of behaviour in a physician, and will make him neither too careless nor too refined, neither the well bred independent man, nor the menial slave; neither too much retired from the world, nor too busy in it. Whoever cultivates such manners as these, must have something peculiar in his carriage; but it will

will be such a peculiarity as will distinguish only the proper dispositions of his station, and he ought to be much better pleased to be denominated the decent, modest and polite physician, than the well bred courtier, or the refined gentleman. Such characters as those demand absolute independance, or the lowest fervility. To the one he has no pretensions, to the other he has merit enough to be superior. The next thing we should consider is, the dress of a physician ; and this may be just as peculiar as his behaviour, peculiar to distinguish the dispositions which belong to his profession, but not the profession itself to which he may belong. Gravity and seriousness we have all along inculcated as the external dispositions, which are his highest ornament. His dress should be entirely accommodated to these. If he set out young, he will possibly be so unfortunate as to have an appearance becoming his years ; he may then assume the dress which brings him nearer to manhood

hood and old age. In middle age he may dress like other gentlemen of the same standing, because then he wants not years to recommend him. In old age, it would be highly improper to assume, that which is inconvenient to the natural imbecility of his constitution, and would acquire him a character as unsuitable to his disposition as to the profession he espouses, an unthinking youth, or a driveling old man.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XIV.

DEAR SIR,

IN describing the different associations which a physician should form upon his entrance upon his profession, we may indulge perhaps too refined policy for most young men, or citizens of the world. But these will depend on the different circumstances of temper, and education, which I have already inculcated. If he enjoy that grave and modest disposition, which I have endeavoured to shew ought to form his natural character, and if he cultivate all the virtues which can adorn the human soul, and which I have strenuously recommended to his attention, it will be easy for him to ally himself to those who are of the same stamp with himself, and who wish for companions in knowledge and moral improvements, as others desire companions
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in their pleasurable and vicious enjoyments.

I am afraid you will think that I want to draw the picture of a partisan against the interests of mankind. To destroy that opinion then, I will be as explicit as possible, in this letter upon the subject. I would always wish to influence, though I abhor the idea of overruling your sentiments. I know you detest every thing that looks like a party, especially a professional party. I would be glad to think with you in this more perhaps than in any other opinion. I will endeavour then to shew you how principles so very jarring as you may suppose ours to be may be reconciled and agree with each other. You suppose that a physician may be attentive to the concerns of his profession, and at the same partake of all the amusements and innocent pleasures of the world. You cannot endure that he should in the least separate himself from the rest of mankind, and be distinguished

guished from them by any peculiarity of garb, or of manners, or of the company which he keeps. I have already said what I think requisite with regard to the two former. With regard to the latter, I could wish you would attend to the following hints, and I am persuaded your candour will consider their importance, if you cannot allow their efficacy.

I am far from thinking a retirement from the world can be of any service to a physician. Nay, I think it is a school in which he may learn the most important lessons. But the world is large and widely extended, and men of all tempers, and of all characters, and of various improvements, are to be found in it. He should be then, I think with you, a citizen of this world, not of the gay, unthinking and immoral part of it, but of that which may comprehend men of judgement, understanding and virtue, whose sentiments are not injured by debauchery, and whose practices do not unfit them for any useful

ful actions. Particularly, I would recommend to a physician, an acquaintance with the gentler and more amiable part of the human species; not because they have better understandings or more learning than men, this you would think me ridiculous in supposing; but because their manners are more agreeable and less vicious, and because their sentiments are more delicate and refined, and their conversation more lively and instructive. A physician is to study the manners of the world, that he may not offend by grimace or rusticity; but he is not to study it, to become acquainted with the vicious practices which are committed in it.

I have now declared my mind sufficiently to propose to you a scheme, which I wish could be put in execution. It would be, to make this profession more particular than it is at present, or is likely ever to be. And the method by which I would desire to effect it should be, not
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by establishing it, as a party against the interests of society, of which mankind are so much afraid. I would wish their manners, and their dress, were a little different from the rest of the world. I could wish too, that their fees were settled by some regulations, which might set them above contempt, but not deprive the greatest part of mankind of receiving benefit from their advice. They should be much abstracted from mankind in general, and only cultivate such a degree of acquaintance, as would free them from embarrassments in their visits. They should employ as much time as possible in reading, and comparing the cases they see, with authors who have delivered to posterity their sentiments and experience. The profession would then be in the hands of thinking and contemplative men only, and every species of craft would be avoided by an openness and generosity of disposition which so much learning, and the cultivation of every humane disposition, would

would inspire. It is want of learning, rather than the excess of it, which induces roguery and cunning; and the more we promote industrious thought, the more we are abstracted from the concerns of the world. This would be the case, even where an establishment was formed, to support a peculiar character, provided such an establishment be the guardian of manners and of dress, and did not influence our opinions or our practice. I cannot think then that a distinguishing garb or a peculiar mode of behaviour, would be attended with any inconvenience upon the plan which I have laid down, and that any would ever offer to be mercenary, where their profits were more confined, and many restrictions to be regarded.

There is one thing which I think proper to mention in this place, and that is, the careless inattention by which people submit themselves to physicians, with whose characters they are utterly unacquainted.

quainted. This may be a great convenience to some practitioners, but is by no means of reciprocal advantage to their patients. Is there any character which a poor desponding wretch, just ready to be embraced by the cold hands of death, is so much interested in as that of a physician, in whom all his hopes are centred? The sincerity of his character is of so much consequence, that he should be acquainted with every part of his conduct through life, with the folly or wisdom of his youth, and the vice or morality of his riper years.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R XV.

D E A R S I R,

I Have at last given you, as far as I am able, what relates to the character of a physician, in his education, his natural temper, and his acquired accomplishments. But it will be necessary, before I finish, to give you some insight into his conduct, and to shew what plan it will be necessary for him to adopt in his concerns with the rest of mankind, his patients, his brethren, and those who are to execute his commands, or are employed in a peculiar branch of the profession. He has a vast field before him, and will be obliged to accommodate himself to the tempers of a great variety of persons. To do this, and preserve his integrity, is a difficult task, so difficult, that I am afraid I can say few persons have ever been able to accomplish it. To know how to do it most effectually, it will be necessary for him to study the ways of human nature,

ture, to have associated himself much with mankind, and endeavoured to improve by the behaviour of every one he has seen. There is one maxim which will always guide him aright in this pursuit, and that is, to study the interests of every one by whom he may be employed. For if one knows the interests of mankind, one may easily discover the bias of their inclinations. I do not intend by this to say that a benevolent temper can have no influence over mankind, I am persuaded it prevails strongly in every human breast. But this temper doth not always interfere with our interests; and where it does not interfere with them, the most benevolent man will attend to their call; where it is promoted by them, he will make them the sole rule of his conduct.

We need not enter into a long digression upon this subject, but it would be easy to shew how the physician may enrich himself whilst he relieves the distresses of his fellow creatures; how the
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merchant adds to his own store, whilst he distributes the blessings of other nations amongst his countrymen; and the Divine may enjoy the luxurious banquet, and fill the purses of his family, whilst he leads mankind in the path of virtue, and saves their souls from destruction.

Your desires are so benevolent, as to oblige me to digress a little from my subject, to illustrate a maxim which you might otherwise have thought too selfish, that the business of a physician is to study the interests of mankind. But this study, if possible, should be encouraged not in the eager hours of practice, but in the independent time of education, if any portion of it can then be spared. Or indeed after the severe part of education is spent, when a few years may be easily appropriated to this agreeable employment. Indeed I think in general persons begin to practise physic too soon. The age of thirty is quite early enough for this undertaking; and if six or seven

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years

years were to be spent between the confined study and the professional practice, a great time would be left for improvements in the knowledge of human nature, and by an attendance upon hospitals we might improve in our practice likewise. Here then may be a proper place to introduce such an injunction.

A very great inconvenience has always attended too early practice; viz. the difficulty of distinguishing the exact time when age commences, and youth departs from our brows. Whoever begins young, will continue so till a younger race than himself begin to be of consequence in the world, and push him forward in order to strengthen their own importance. But when a man begins to settle in middle life, mankind at least consider him as he is, and sometimes will grant him a few more years than he may enjoy. Besides, too early practice is very often defeated in expectation; and that so far influences us from learning the manners of the world,

world, with good nature and an independent spirit, that it creates a sour and peevish disposition, the natural effect of disappointment, and encourages a fondness for retirement, with an aversion to the proper pursuits.—But a knowledge of the world in affluence, and with independence, encourages a proper spirit in mankind; we enjoy company without any views of interest, and we are not disappointed in what we do not expect. Men too are apt to be more open, and less cautions, when they associate with persons upon a level with themselves, whilst they are averse to forming connections with those who must engage their interests as well as their esteem. It is common, it may be said, for men to do what we are describing as unnatural; but that is no proof that it is desirable or convenient. Necessity often constrains where nature recoils. Thus persons in high stations are most subjected to this dilemma. Their fellows in life are not easily to be found, and they are often sur-

rounded by a set of forward sycophants, who prevail over their best intentions, and force a regard to their designs.

But physicians in full business can pay little regard to the few who may promote their interests, nor officiously engage amongst a great number to support them. Mankind naturally fly from the idea of relief but when they want it, and the thought of the profession is sufficient to disgust, whilst the man who enjoys it may be countenanced and esteemed. A knowledge of the world then, which is so necessary to be cultivated, should be learnt in the younger and independent part of our lives, and should be made a necessary part of our education. Without it we cannot practise at all, neither can we practise with ease whilst we are learning it's rules. But if we have been previously acquainted with it, and are properly qualified for the profession; we enter upon practice with every advantage that could be wish-

wished. We know how to treat the humours of mankind, and we are disembarassed in affording them relief.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

DEAR SIR,

WHEN a phyfician enters upon practice, he will meet with many things to please him, and he will meet with others that will difappoint and difguft him. He will meet with favours where he little expected them, and he will meet with neglect from thofe he thought his fincereft friends. And the reason of this is plain. Thofe who know little of him, put him often upon a level with others, with whose fame and abilities they are equally unacquainted; whilst his intimate friends know his defects as well as his accomplishments, and rather chufe to truft themselves to a person of whose experience at leaft they are better affured. But the tenor of his conduct fhould always be the fame; and whatever inward fentiments he
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may entertain, he should endeavour carefully to conceal them from the world. He is to consider all mankind as his friends already, or to be made so by his behaviour towards them. A general complacency, affability and civility of manners, we will suppose him to shew to every one, that at least he may engage their good will, if he cannot engage their employment of him. And this is all the art we would encourage him to make use of, to obtain practice in his profession. His character, as a gentleman and a scholar, renders him superior to every mean pursuit. But the benevolence of a man, and the politeness of good breeding, are his greatest ornaments. They will support his dignity, whilst they gain him applause.

I will not pretend to describe the many little arts, which I have been informed that some employ to gain approbation. All my censure shall be derived from a reflection on the general character I represent.

present. I shall proceed, then, to shew how a physician should demean himself with those persons, who have approved of his character, and are disposed to employ him.

In the first place, he should conceal any disgust, which he may entertain against the behaviour of his patients. It is his lot often to see them in such a state as they would wish never to have known to their nearest friends. Sicknefs, and the prospect of approaching death, operate so powerfully on our fears, as to dissolve all attention to the opinions of the rest of the world. Should a physician resent any thing of this kind, should he spurn at ill treatment, and refuse any longer to afford his attendance, in what wretched circumstances would he leave his patient, whose confidence is reposed solely in him? and how could he surmount the ill consequences of his pride? But a thinking and benevolent man would refer
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such behaviour to it's proper principles, the prevalence of the disease, and would wish to serve a poor wretch with all his failings about him, rather than desert a life, which might be of value to society.

Secondly, A physician should always assume the part of a friend to his patient. A benevolent heart indeed will always be the friend of distress ; it is not difficult then for one who encourages such a temper (if it want encouragement) to act properly in this case. Mankind love to be soothed ; they feel themselves, and they look for pity from others. To give it is the payment of a debt, to withhold it an increase of the obligation.

Thirdly, Patience is a considerable qualification in a physician. In a vast variety of business, he may not be so anxious for the welfare of his patients as they are for their own, or he may see them in a more favourable light than they view themselves. But neglect or inattention, in consequence of such an opi-

opinion, is unpardonable. They often delight in enumerating every circumstance of their complaint; to stop them in their career might suppress many a valuable discovery, to despise their anxiety would be inhuman. Their tales may be told, and a physician may avail himself of the good to be derived from them, whilst, unknown to the patient, he may neglect every thing which appears to his mind to be useless.

Fourthly, A physician should always endeavour to keep up the spirits of his patients, to cherish pleasantries and good-humour, and contribute as much as possible to calm their disquietudes, and alleviate their distress. There are some gloomy persons, who think it a mark of honesty to acquaint their patients with the effect of every unlucky symptom which may happen to arise. The ill consequence of this is, that their fears will always aggravate the disease. And the good ones, none. For if they live, they will
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thank him for a recovery which is gained by his address; and if they die, they will not rise up in judgement against him, for preventing a preparation, which they will be conscious could have no avail.

Fifthly, He should never be overbearing in his practice. If he find in his patient a fondness for any peculiar mode of healing, or any particular remedies, he might hearken to their desires so much as to reject with modesty what they offer, and propose with the same temper what he might think more efficacious. To shew reserve too, is often a great inconvenience upon these occasions. One may often be explicit without any danger of misleading; and reserve is only necessary when questions are too impertinent to be answered, and the consequence of a reply might be fatal to the sick-man.

Sixthly, Nothing should engage him to neglect that proper attention, which should

should be paid to the case of his patient. A fatal error might here be committed, which through his whole life he might never be able to repair. Besides, his presence revives the drooping spirits of those whom he attends, who look for him with eagerness, rejoice in his company as often as he can afford it, and are unhappy to be separated from him. Neither the punctilios then of the profession, an inattention to business, or a fondness for any other pursuit, should induce him to desert a dangerous case; nor a love of the reward, on the contrary, persuade him to more attendance than what is absolutely necessary to do good.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R XVII.

DEAR SIR,

TO proceed with the subject of my last letter, give me leave in the seventh place to observe, that it is necessary for a physician to be very particular in the questions he may ask concerning the disease of his patients, or attentively hearken to their informations about it. And this I would advise, not only to gain as much intelligence as possible, but to engage confidence likewise. Persuaded that a physician thinks deeply upon the case before him, that he makes his profession a serious and important business of his life, and that he wishes to do good independently of the reward to be derived from it; mankind naturally become pleased with his character, and wish to submit themselves to his care. This attention may indeed be counterfeited, and it may be practised by persons whose ex-

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ternal behaviour indicates the contrary. But the only security mankind can enjoy will be from their own experience and observation, and these they will depend upon, in opposition to every assurance we may wish to give them that they are deceived.

One of the strongest marks, by which attention is discovered, will be seen in a circumstance which, in a variety of business, cannot always be put in execution, but is ever admired, in those who can enjoy it, and with industry it may in some measure be cultivated. This is, the remembrance of what hath previously happened in the course of the disease, and depends on a good memory to recollect. Art may be made to supply a defect in some measure of strong abilities, and if the more striking and remarkable occurrences be remembered, it will be sufficient to satisfy our own minds, it will contribute to satisfy the mind of the patient, and it will naturally lead to a recognition-

cognition of those facts which are less important.

In the eighth and last place, a physician, of all men, should be free from the common resentments, which gentlemen and men of the world esteem of so much importance to support their dignity ; a dignity which may be much better sustained by a benevolent heart, and a prudent conduct. There may be circumstances, it may be alledged, which may irritate a physician to quarrel with his patients, and with other men. And a selfish person may imagine, he is justified in extorting whatever may be his due. If a physician were appropriated to a few persons, whom he might change at pleasure, he might give up the amiable character of his profession, whilst he supported his right. But when he lives connected with a world, by exacting even his due from that small number, who may refuse to give it, he may lose the affections

of the multitude, by whom he is to be supported, and who in general are disposed to be more liberal. This is an argument taken from interest. But if we reason from the gentlemanlike manner, in which he should support the profession, we may advance something more powerful. A physician should consider himself as an officer of the public, who, by the benevolence of his heart, is obliged to support his character. This inclines him to do all the good he can in the world, and he suffers those whom he attends to judge in what manner they can best reward him, and to determine not what he ought to receive, but what they themselves are able and willing to give. If physicians fees were to be put upon this footing, they would, I believe, be more universally employed, they would be better satisfied in their own minds, and they would avoid all occasions of animosity and discontent. I would advise physicians to be blind to the persons from whom the fee is received; and if they must attend to these things, attend only to the

result of the business of the day, and from that calculate the profits of their practice.

Having said so much with regard to the behaviour of a physician, give me leave to intimate to you what ought in some measure to be the behaviour of patients likewise. For to expect all good conduct on one side, and none on the other, is a little unjust. If a physician be obliged to become the friend of his patient; the patient, in return, should behave civilly, complaisantly and generously to his physician. He should consider him as a gentleman, almost always in education, very often in rank, and sometimes in fortune equal with himself. He should esteem him as superior to every low and groveling action, and should despise provoking him, to what his prudence and regard to good-breeding forbids him to resent. He should attend likewise to the nature of his abilities, the regard he pays to the good of his fellow

creatures, and the laborious education he has cultivated. In fine, he should look upon him as devoted to the public good, and as having adopted the utmost benevolence to be the spring of his conduct. Whilst he preserves this character, he should behave towards him with the respect which is due to a gentleman, and the gratitude which is due to a benefactor. He should consider him as capable of being of real service, and therefore should never trifle with him, in the description of any complaint, or suppress any circumstance which might be strictly, nay superstitiously complied with. As the voice of a friend is heard with attention, when it brings wholesome counsel to an ingenuous ear, so the prescriptions of a physician, which are benevolently intended, should be received with gratitude. Men are very apt, even when they employ a physician, instead of his to substitute their own judgment, and by this means flatter their own ignorance, whilst they despise his knowledge. There is

nothing more ungenerous than this, and I believe the only method to bring the profession into repute, and destroy the various species of quackery now so much in vogue, would be to restore the confidence mankind naturally place in physicians, and follow the dictates of reason in this as in every other pursuit.

I am, &c.

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LETTER XVIII.

DEAR SIR,

IN the whole of our description of a physician's character, we have inculcated upon him the disposition of prudence. But it is such a prudence as is founded on the noblest and most generous sentiments of human-nature. We do not intend, by any means, to instil into him those narrow and confined principles which refer only to his peculiar interest. Such advice I would be far from giving, nor would wish you to educate your son to a profession which stood in need of it, or which warranted a practice repugnant to the benevolence of his heart, and the springs of action in mankind.

I have often told you, how necessary it will be for a physician to avoid many things to which the natural bent of his inclination may direct him; and in my last letter,

letter, I acquainted you of what consequence it would be to suppress many emotions, which other men justify themselves in indulging. But did I by this advice make him a worse citizen, or less amiable member of society? Did I stop any generous emotion, or lead him to give up the real benefits of mankind? By teaching him to be prudent, I taught him only to act with greater ease to himself, and to cure his patients with greater satisfaction. The same disposition of prudence dictated by the same principles, is of equal consequence in his concerns and conversation with his brethren of the same profession, whose acquaintance a generous heart will lead him particularly to cultivate. There is a jealousy, I am sorry to say it, which often reigns amongst these persons, as amongst the meanest and most servile artificers. Whenever it arises, it is highly unpardonable to indulge it, and a man of generosity will endeavour to avoid it, or at least will conceal it from the world. It is
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derived from very false principles, and physicians, where a number are settled in any particular place, should consider a want of employment, to be owing to their own want of abilities, some defects in their education or manners, few friends to introduce them into business, or the whim and caprice of mankind which will be served, rather than to any meanness or dissingenuity in their brethren, who are happy enough to enjoy it. If every one thought in this manner, what reason would there be for envy, or any of those displeasing reflections which might create unfriendly animosities ?

Every physician, before he enters upon business, should weigh in his mind what situation is more agreeable to his natural disposition, and to his desires of doing good. And when he can accommodate himself to these, should wait contented for the favours which may be bestowed upon him, and enjoy with cheerfulness whatever he may acquire. If he be at the head of the profession where he practises,

tises, he has little to fear from those beneath him, whilst he cultivates those generous dispositions, which will preserve the esteem he has obtained. He has no reason then, but to encourage a degree of intimacy with them, communicate to them his experience, and enable them to tread the path of life with the same dignity as himself. If he do not immediately succeed to the utmost of his wishes, let him hope for future contingencies in his favour, and let him cultivate the acquaintance and good will, rather than indulge spleen and ill nature, against those who may assist him in his knowledge, and in his practice. There is so much to be learnt by an intimate association amongst physicians, that I am surprized it is not more frequently cultivated. We see none more intimate than students of medicine. Why then should any narrow views of interest deprive practitioners of equal advantages ! and why should men, whose conduct should be directed by the most generous sentiments, despise each other,

other, for knowledge from which they may receive a mutual benefit !

Physicians are often obliged to consultations with their brethren, it may be necessary for them to know how to act upon these occasions. If they consult with those who are older than themselves, which is most commonly the case, the greatest respect must be made to their years, and to their experience ; their opinions are to be delivered first, and if agreeable to the sentiments of the younger, readily complied with. Not opposed by him to shew his knowledge, or display his importance. If they are opponent to his general idea, he should not avoid giving his advice, for fear of being despised ; nor decline his reasons, although certain they will not prevail. ~~This~~ opinion may have an effect, tho' the persons he consults with may be too proud to acknowledge it. But by silence he flatters what he esteems ignorance, and may prolong the danger of his patient. If
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physicians of equal ages, and equal consequences meet together, they should studiously avoid any vehement disputes, the result of which will always be either a medium by way of reconciliation, which is good for nothing, or an adherence to the scheme of the most obstinate, which may be prejudicial. The best method to be observed in these cases is, to be as open to conviction as possible, and then nothing will be opposed that is not repugnant to common-sense. It would be useless for me to shew you, what ought to be the conduct of the older physicians towards those beneath them. Experience should make them wise; and where it doth not, I am certain instruction will have little avail.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XIX.

D E A R S I R,

IT will be our next business, to enquire how a physician should demean himself towards others of the same profession, who ply in an inferior station, and are in some measure or upon particular occasions subjected to his commands. The first of these we shall mention are included under the name of surgeons, who belong to a part of the profession much inferior to what he has espoused. This doth not arise from an inferiority of abilities, or oftentimes of education; but from less enlarged views of the nature of the profession, from a more slavish and mechanical employment, and from the attainment of their education in a more mean and servile manner. Whatever then such persons may plead in favour of their knowledge and abilities, they have still many disagreeable circumstances in their employ-

employment which they can never overcome or dissolve.

In our examination of the manner in which physicians should behave towards them, we will suppose them fully sensible of the defects as well as advantages of their profession, and never obtruding upon a business which they are often as incapable of practising, as ungenerous in attempting.—Whatever others may boast, we will venture to advance, that a physician should be above resenting their ill offices, and be indolent in enquiring after them. He pities indeed the misfortunes of a friend, who suffers from too great credulity, but does not condemn him, for a confidence of which he will very soon feel the ill effects.—But to those who are contented with the manual employment of surgery, a good physician will behave towards them with all the candour that is due to the importance of their character in society. He will not despise them because they are not ranked

ranked quite so high in the stations of their lives, but will value them for every proficiency they have made, which may give happiness to their fellow creatures. They are entitled to a high degree of regard from all mankind, and perhaps on account of their immediate utility, more to be esteemed than the physician. For men may die in peace, but they can never live happily in pain. Besides, every part of their employment is of considerable use, whether they act by their own judgment, or under the direction of a physician. In the former, as requiring much ~~direction~~, a steady hand, and a good deal of knowledge; in the other, as performing operations ~~the~~ most essential in the practice of physic.

There are many cases, in which they are brought into consultations with ~~the~~ physicians, where their knowledge is of considerable service, and their observations worthy of attention. In such circumstances a physician should consider them
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as his equal, and pay them all the respect which is due to their knowledge. But if they transgress the bounds of this profession, and enter upon what ought to be unknown to them; he may suppress their observations, but with that modesty which is becoming his natural character, and which is peculiarly decent, where an apparent superiority is acknowledged. Perhaps the best method of correcting too great forwardness, is by a becoming silence, which will censure sufficiently without exposing the object of it to shame. Give me leave, whilst I am upon this subject, to recommend to the physician likewise a peculiar degree of attention how he invade the province of the surgeon; for, tho' it be necessary he should cultivate the knowledge of surgery, it is by no means necessary he should practise the art; and custom hath distinguished these occupations from each other.

Now that there ought to be a distinction between these characters, I will endeavour

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deavour to shew, because some persons have vainly imagined there was no necessity for a separation. I have already told you, what education is necessary for a physician; and I think it is quite sufficient to occupy the greatest part of his younger years, and will leave no opportunity or leisure for a mechanical employment. And when he has finished his studies, he is deprived of that alertness and dexterity which is an essential qualification in the character of a surgeon. The skilful manner of handling a surgeon's instrument, hath been thought of so much consequence, as to require the use of a great many years. If a physician then be disqualified from the practice of surgery, from not being able to perform those operations which constitute the basis of the profession, how very improper will it be, for a surgeon to think of practising physic, when his younger years have been almost totally engaged in a manual employment which requires experience, skill and adroitness? Will he

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pretend to practise this first, and study physic afterwards? I will venture to affirm he will be much mistaken. That science which is learnt from books in a course of reading during a busy practice, can be of little use to those who have not derived their first knowledge from the lectures of learned professors, and the conversation of ingenious students. And if they attend the necessary lectures, they will lose that dexterity which is requisite to be constantly supported, as well as carefully to be obtained.

Whilst then there is a natural diversity in the pursuits of these gentlemen, and a natural diversity in their characters, it is necessary a distinction should be inviolably preserved between them. And although I would never advise a physician violently to resent the encouragements of the surgeon; yet I would wish he would always avoid paying an undue respect to their characters. Besides, I am persuaded a manifest advantage would arise to both from preserving this distinction perfect. They

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would both practise with greater utility to mankind, and with greater ease and satisfaction to themselves. They would be better paid, more respectably treated, and ensure with better prospects their success. These observations with regard to surgeons may be made with respect to men-midwives likewise ; they are in fact surgeons, they have the same kind of education, and are excluded from general practice. Some of them indeed have a degree of practice, but that does not endue them with knowledge.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

DEAR SIR,

WE have but one set of persons left with whom the physician has any connection. They are persons, however, who are of infinite consequence to the utility of his practice, and whose interest he is obliged in some measure to support. They are the apothecaries, upon whom in many respects he is dependent, and who yet are apparently the subjects of his command. He is to act towards them in such a manner, as neither to acknowledge his dependance, nor to enforce in too arbitrary a manner his dominion. The former would shew too slavish, the latter too tyrannical a behaviour. They have a great deal in their power; they are more intimately connected with the families who employ them, and have powerful means of resentment. Every physician, who plumes himself upon the cha-

character of generosity, will despise every thing that promotes his interest at the expence of his integrity, and the safety of his fellow creatures. He will despise then every mean artifice by which these people may be flattered, and by which he may think to ingratiate himself into their favour. But at the same time will avoid despising them, for a character which is valuable in its place. He will esteem them for their real, not their apparent abilities, and respect them in proportion as he finds them endued with sense and erudition. If they should have it in their power to serve him, he will not slavishly court their friendship, where pride and folly preside over their actions; neither will he be so delicate as to shun it, where a good understanding directs them, for fear mankind should misconstrue his designs.

To be a little more particular; We may say, in the first place, that as persons with whom he is so nearly connected, he is
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to behave towards them with good-manners; not to assume a power to them, because custom has appointed them to execute his commands. Where, indeed, they obtrude their judgements, and are willing to direct him in his conduct; he may consider the motives of their behaviour.— If it be directed by a regard for the sick person, they may be heard with patience; and if they advance any thing for his good, may be carefully regarded. If they act from a principle of forwardness, he may suppress their opinions by silence, or by contempt.

2. It may be necessary, sometimes, for a physician to consult with them; and in this he is to judge of their abilities. If he find them, upon such occasions, men of real knowledge, and sound judgement, he will not despise them for the station in which they are placed, but will endeavour to avail himself of all the knowledge he can derive from them. They are often employed in families, in every slight oc-

occurrence, from the earliest infancy of its members, and by this means become intimately acquainted with their constitutions. To despise this knowledge, which they derive from experience, and may be improved by good sense, would be injurious to the patient; and whatever a physician may think of condescending to consult with them, yet it is often of so much consequence, that the science which is built upon humanity, would always wish to embrace it. A physician, a generous, not a haughty physician, I mean, will endeavour to know as much as he can. Nor will he ever despise the means by which he obtains experience, let them appear to the world ever so dishonourable, or excite the envy of his brethren. But, on the other hand, he will never make a parade of consulting apothecaries, where no good can be derived from it; nor practise any menial employment, to distinguish himself by a humility which is not expected from him. He will always consider the end of his profession, the good and benefit

fit of his patients. To procure this, he will condescend to many an action which may seem degrading; but he will never cultivate a disposition, which will make such actions familiar to him, when the end is not to be obtained by them. There is a dignity which should always belong to his character, because it raises the confidence of the patient. When it is lowered to do good, the consequence is in proportion to the height from which it was let down.

3. As it is highly improper for apothecaries to order for a patient, except in very slight cases; it is equally unbecoming a physician to interfere with them, in the pharmaceutical part of their profession. He is to suppose them, till he find the contrary, well versed in their business, and is to allow them every privilege he himself would wish to enjoy. It may sometimes happen that some of them may be ignorant. In such case he may easily instruct, without seeming to direct. For the same ignorance which may disqualify

for business, may occasion an insensibility of the designs of the physician.

4. Nothing can be more mean and ungenerous, than for physicians to endeavour to injure apothecaries, by giving directions to patients how to prepare their own medicines. It may be consulting the pecuniary advantage of the patient, but is by no means of service to his health or constitution ; common medicines are much better prepared, and are composed of more efficacious materials, when made up in an apothecary's shop, than can possibly be in any private family. But there may be some limitations to this rule, where the expence would be very enormous, and the method of preparation not very tedious and accurate. If the physician preside over the process, he does a double piece of injustice, because he may receive a fee in proportion, and thus cheat the apothecary, and defraud his patient at the same time.

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5. Where apothecaries are old, and the physician young, all deference should be paid to their experience and judgement, and the utmost modesty required in directing them. It is very possible for a young man to know more than one who is advanced in years; he may have been taught upon better principles, and studied with greater diligence. But facts are stubborn things, particularly medical facts; let him attend then to them wherever they are offered, and exercise his judgement upon them as he pleases.

I have now finished my observations on the character and conduct of a physician; and I think I cannot conclude better, than by wishing your son may enjoy every thing I have offered which is just and good, which may render him happy in himself, and amiable to the society to which he may belong.

I am, &c.

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